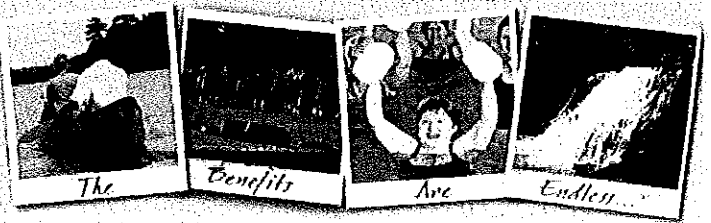


CONNECTICUT RECREATION AND PARKS ASSOCIATION



Testimony before the Planning and Development Committee

March 21, 2014

**In Support of Raised Bill 5580: AN ACT CONCERNING
THE PESTICIDE ADVISORY COUNCIL, THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE EMERGENCY MEDICAL
SERVICES PRIMARY SERVICE AREA TASK FORCE AND THE ELIMINATION OF A MUNICIPAL MANDATE.**

Good morning. My name is Ray Favreau. I am a member of the Legislative Committee for the **Connecticut Recreation and Parks Association, Inc. (CRPA)**, and also the Director of Parks and Recreation for the Town of South Windsor. CRPA represents about 600 individual professionals from municipal, nonprofit and private, park, recreation & camp organizations, as well as 128 of the 169 municipal park and recreation departments in Connecticut.



Also, please note that we are joined in our testimony today, by the **Connecticut Association of Schools / Connecticut Interscholastic Athletic Conference (CAS/CIAC)** which consists of more than 1,000 public and parochial elementary, middle and high schools in addition to charter, magnet and technical schools in Connecticut. CIAC is the portion of the organization which regulates interscholastic athletics.

CRPA and CAS/CIAC supports HB 5580. The bill would create an unbiased advisory council within DEEP which would actively monitor both organic and synthetic pesticides for their safe usage in maintaining municipal fields and grounds. It further tasks this council with creating and maintaining a report on best practices regarding the safe and effective use of both organic and synthetic pesticides. This advisory council will take emotion out of the issue and establish a protocol based on science, education, and research that can change with science moving forward. The bill would make it easier for municipalities to comply with DEEP regulations and allow municipalities to share resources, further protecting the public.

Park and recreation professionals need safe and effective tools when maintaining our fields and grounds.

This bill would give them these tools. Many departments throughout Connecticut are experiencing difficulty in maintaining the quality of their grounds and fields. For example, my town of South Windsor has been faced with rapidly declining fields and large expenses in attempts to rehabilitate them. The increased presence of grubs in fields has attracted rodents, which literally tear up turf, leaving dangerous holes and low spots, increasing the risk of player injury. Species, such as crabgrass, invade and the soil in turn hardens. The soil does not always respond to aeration, which also causes an increased risk of injury to young athletes. Additionally, weed infested sidewalks and parking lots have to be treated manually and/or mechanically which is labor intensive, costly, causes reduced life of the pavement and concrete, and has extremely short-lived results. We must also be given the tools to address health hazards from numerous other invasives and pests such as poison ivy and wasps.



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This committee would provide municipalities with guidelines to help reduce the use of toxic substances whether they are organic or synthetic. Contrast this with the current application of unregulated organic substances, which in many cases are toxic.

CRPA supports an education and science based approach to field and ground maintenance. Therefore, we urge the passage of HB 5580. Passage of HB 5580 is a step in the right direction in protecting our children, our playing areas, and the environment.

This completes my testimony. Thank you for your attention.

Ray Favreau, CPRP

Legislative Committee Member, CT Recreation and Parks Association, Inc.

Director of Parks and Recreation, Town of South Windsor